



State of Utah

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
DIVISION OF OIL, GAS AND MINING

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J.
m/c37/054

August 30, 2002

TO: Minerals File

FROM: Paul Baker, Senior Reclamation Biologist *PBB*

RE: Site Inspection, Cotter Corporation, Papoose Mine and Exploration, M/037/084 and E/037/094, San Juan County, Utah

Date of Inspection: August 15, 2002
Time of Inspection: 1:45-2:15 p.m.
Conditions: Mostly sunny, 80's
Participants: Doug Jensen and Paul Baker, DOGM; some employees were on site, but they did not accompany us

Purpose of Inspection:

On July 12, 2002, the Division received a letter asking for termination of exploration notice of intention E/037/094. The purpose of the inspection was to look at the reclamation work in this area and determine if it was adequate for release.

Getting to the site:

The site is in the Lisbon Valley about a mile south of where the Lisbon Valley road splits off from the road leading into the Big Indian Valley.

Observations:

The exploration area is southeast of the mine and basically consists of a road about 150 feet long where the vegetation was cleared. Vegetation in the area is a dense pinyon/juniper community with little understory growth.

The operator has roughened the exploration area and spread brush over the surface (Photo 1); however, there was very little vegetation in the reclaimed area.

We also drove around the active mine area. There was a sediment trap in the northwest corner of the mine, and it was in good repair. There is a limited amount of topsoil available, but the operator has been windrowing it on the sides of the mine. There has still been no contemporaneous reclamation done.

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Conclusions and Recommendations:

As far as we could tell, the operation is proceeding according to the mine plan. Although we would like to see the operator begin reclamation in some parts of the mine, it appeared to us that this would be difficult because of the ongoing operations, including the space needed for product stockpiles.

The operator needs to seed the topsoil stockpiles and try to get something growing on them other than weeds.

The operator did a good job preparing the surface of the exploration area, and I expect the area will eventually have good vegetation cover. Eastern Utah is in a severe drought, and this is probably the reason there is so little growing. There could still be some viable seed from last year's seeding, but the operator should not rely on something so uncertain. The exploration area needs to be reseeded this fall, and the seed should be raked into the soil.

Even if there was adequate vegetation, the Division would not yet be able to release the site. The rules require that the vegetation survive three growing seasons before a site can be released, and this area was just reclaimed last fall.

jb

cc: John Blake, SITLA
Jon Showalter, Cotter

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ATTACHMENT

**Photographs
S/037/084 and E/037/094
Papoose Mine and Exploration**



Photo 1. Papoose exploration reclaimed area.